

'Jamigrant': The story of a Jamaican immigrant set to hit book stores soon

New York:

A NEW book by Jamaican, Marie Bell-Mack, relating her experiences through immigration, the justice system and teaching gives a true life account of the challenges faced by her since migrating to the United States.

It is a reflective, personal tale examining what she learned over the years about how success and happiness are defined.

After migrating from Jamaica to the United States in the mid 1980s, Bell-Mack joined the City of Mount Vernon Police Department, becoming the first Jamaican woman on the force. She served for 20 years before retiring as a detective.

As her new book makes clear, Bell-Mack was privy to the disheartening deficiencies of the criminal justice system. Caught up within it, she relates in her book, what she learned about ongoing issues such as failing leadership and the system's handling of mental instability among its members.

Her experiences in the criminal

justice system made clear to her that serious changes needed to be made.

"The book is timely given the current focus on the need to reform the criminal justice system in the United States to prevent more people from falling through the cracks."

Bell-Mack said that she was motivated to write the book because she wanted to share her professional experiences with others who may want to contribute to much needed criminal justice reform in the United States.

She also wanted her story to be a light for other immigrants like herself.

She points out that the most important lesson for criminal justice professionals, especially police officers, is to understand the correct way to deal with situations based on the social context in which they occurred.

PERSEVERANCE

As the book makes clear, Bell-Mack's life is one of perseverance and her journey tells of

diving into the gritty reality of a country that seems so shiny from a distance.

Bell-Mack was born in Buff Bay, Portland, Jamaica but spent most of her childhood in Moneague, St. Ann, where she attended Ferncourt High School and later Moneague Teacher's College. She taught school in Jamaica before immigrating to the United States.

Here, she attended Fordham University where she received a bachelor's degree in psychology and later a master's degree in public administration from John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

In 1995 she joined the Mount Vernon police force and after retirement went back to teaching as an adjunct professor of criminal justice.

"Jamigrant: The story of a Jamaican Immigrant," is her first book.

The book "Jamigrant: The Story of a Jamaican Immigrant," is set to hit book stores later this month.